

Written Testimony Supporting  
Proposed House Bill 7285, An Act Concerning Complaints That Allege Misconduct By  
Law Enforcement Agency Personnel

Senator Doyle, Senator Kissel, Representative Tong, and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Catherine Summ and I am a resident of Newtown, Connecticut. I am in support of Proposed House Bill 7285, which intends to ensure compliance with the provisions of section 7-294bb of the Connecticut general statutes concerning the acceptance, processing, and investigation of a complaint from a member of the public relating to alleged misconduct committed by law enforcement agency personnel.

I have lived in Newtown for almost 18 years and I take great pride in my town, especially the sense of community that I have experienced since moving here. I live in a town where people genuinely look out for one another and care about each person's well-being. In addition, I live in a community that strives to provide its citizens with distinguished public services. That is why I'm writing to you today.

Proposed House Bill 7285 recognizes that our police process is imperfect, but it could go further to fix it. I support the intention of Proposed House Bill 7285, but I ask the committee to amend this bill so that it is fully realized. A recent survey by the ACLU of Connecticut, which was the subject of an article in the February 1 edition of *The Newtown Bee*, clearly shows that many Connecticut police agencies still make it difficult and confusing for members of the public to easily obtain information regarding complaint forms. It is clear H.B. 7285 must be amended to:

1. establish meaningful penalties for law enforcement agencies that do not comply with state complaint acceptance and investigation laws.
2. create a standardized complaint form that is compliant with best practices and translated into all commonly-spoken languages in Connecticut, and
3. require law enforcement agencies to track complaint data and to annually report specific complaint information to the Connecticut Office of Policy Management.

Establishing a standardized and accessible police complaint process is necessary for creating an equitable and just police force in Connecticut. Amending H.B. 7285 will establish the community's faith in the police complaint process as well as a sense that we are holding our law enforcement agencies accountable.

I urge the members of this committee to amend and support Proposed House Bill 7285.

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